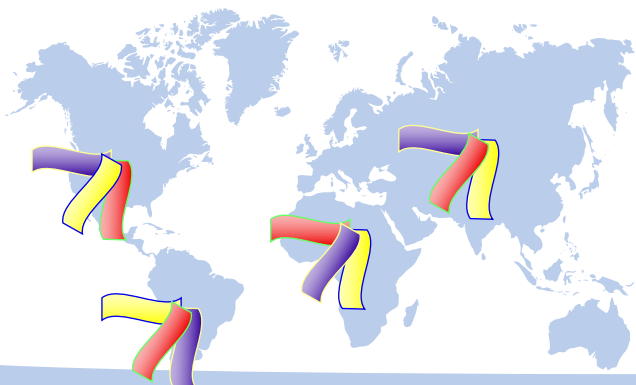


Celebrating Family Heritage

An International Mother Language Day Activity for Family Fun Night at HS/EHS



Purpose

- ◆ Celebrate the diversity of languages
- ◆ Encourage family conversations about their home languages and language heritage

Materials needed

- ◆ Map of the world
- ◆ Map pins or tape
- ◆ Narrow sticky notes in three colors
- ◆ Pens



Activity

1. Post the map against a surface like a corkboard or foam-core board.
2. Use a separate color for each of the following:
 - a. **Color 1: First language**—the first language(s) the person learned (mother/home language)
 - b. **Color 2: Second language**—any other languages learned after the first language
 - c. **Color 3: Heritage language**—any languages spoken by parents, grandparents, or other relatives currently or in the past
3. Ask each family member to write the languages he or she speaks, or those that were or are spoken within their family, on the sticky notes.
4. Have each family member create a “fan” of all of his or her sticky notes, put a map pin through the one end of the fan or use a small piece of tape to secure the fan to the map.

5. Place the pin of fanned sticky notes on the world map in the location each family member’s ancestors came from.
6. Make a list of all of the languages represented after everyone has placed their fans on the map.

Guidance

- ◆ People may list a particular variation or dialect of a language that they speak (or their ancestor’s spoke), such as “British English,” “Quebec French” (Quebeçois), or “Puerto Rican Spanish.” Whether or not to do this can be each person’s choice.
- ◆ Encourage children to ask their families about their languages and culture.
- ◆ If someone does not know what language their ancestors spoke, encourage him or her to find out by asking relatives or doing research online.
- ◆ Encourage families to talk with their children about what their language means to them.
- ◆ For information about a language, including correct spelling, where it is spoken, and related languages, visit www.ethnologue.com and <http://www.unesco.org/culture/languages-atlas/>.
- ◆ For more information about Mother Language Day and additional activities, visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/mother-language.html/>.



Adapted from an activity developed by the
Recovering Voices Program at the Smithsonian Institution

